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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: HUNGARIAN COMMENTS ON UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY THIRD  
COMMITTEE PRIORITIES

REF: SECSTATE 93981

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR ERIC GAUDIOSI, REASONS 1.4(b)  
AND (d)

¶1. (C) MFA UN International Organization Department Desk Officer Krisztina Kovacs discussed Reftel with PolOff on September 4. Kovacs expressed Hungary's general support for the U.S. agenda and said that Hungary expects to be more actively engaged during the 2008 session. This increased involvement comes in response to what Kovacs described as "concern," in particular, over the direction of the Human Rights Council. Kovacs said Hungary shares the U.S. concern that some regional bloc groups are preventing the passage of important agenda items. That said, Kovacs recognized that Hungary is often constrained by the consensus approach within the European Union.

¶2. (C) Country-specific resolutions: Kovacs said that Hungary plans to coordinate with the EU to present a united front on country-specific resolutions. She said that Hungary is not in a position to give its opinion without first consulting other EU states. EU discussions on these issues are slated for later this month. She expects Hungary will support the Iran resolution. Kovacs was more cautious in commenting on potential resolutions re Zimbabwe and Sudan, saying Hungary must first reach its own political consensus on these issues.

¶3. (C) Thematic Resolutions: Kovacs said Hungary favors a resolution on freedom of expression, commenting that Hungary recognizes that there are challenges about the specific details of the resolution that must be addressed. She noted that the Hungarian Constitutional Court recently struck down an attempt by the National Assembly to outlaw hate speech. Kovacs described the hate speech discussion as a "sensitive question" within Hungary. Kovacs said Hungary is not currently in favor of a resolution on defamation of religions, saying that such a resolution is not "useful." She also stated that there is no consensus within the EU on how to address this resolution proposal. Foley